

12/6/84

HOOF & MOUTH is published by Donald L. Sigwalt, 125 Hebard St., Rochester, NY 14605; (716) 232-1879. It is dedicated to serving the postal Diplomacy hobby by running a few games. Diplomacy is Avalon Hill's registered trademark for a game invented by Alan Calhamer.

RAMBLINGS

Here I am again. I was hoping #2A wouldn't be necessary but I guess it is if I want to fill a game. As of now I have 4 people signed up (Brad Wilson, Mark Trifkovic, Dan Larose, Steve Annawoodian). I want to thank these 4 for joining and want to apologize for not having the game filled yet. If any of you get tired of waiting and want off the list let me know. I also want to thank those of you who plugged my openings and responded to me. Since I need more people I hope y'all continue to announce my games.

This mailing I'm using a newer address list (1984). Hopefully that'll mean better results. To those of you who didn't receive H&M #1A I will detail my game openings again: I will run a maximum of 3 games. They will have 3 week deadlines. They will not be part of a Dip zine. The players will get only the game results and those results will be sent to the players only. There is no game fee or sub fee or NMR deposit. I will not be using stand-bys. Openings are on a first come first served basis and preference lists will be accepted. Press will be encouraged but limited if necessary to keep my costs down.

Again, I would greatly appreciate any announcement you could make regarding these openings.

THANK YOU.

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DIPLOMACY VS CIVILIZATION

We all know Diplomacy is a great game but is Civilization better? In a way that's a silly question because of course it's a matter of opinion and individual taste. Yet I believe a comparison is in order. I'm a big fan of Diplomacy and I'm sort of naturally attracted to Civ. I've found that in general, people who are interested in Dip are also interested in Civ and visa-versa. So let's take a closer look at both from a gamer's point of view.

First, Diplomacy can be played by phone or by mail with

success whereas Civ cannot (could you trade by mail?). Dippy has a definite advantage here and no further discussion is needed.

Secondly, face to face Dip needs 7 players and suffers with less participants. Civ is also a 7 player game but with fewer people it retains its flavor and more importantly its fairness to all players (and therefore its playability). I've been in both 6 and 7 player Dippy and Civy. The loss of Italy in Dip gives France a definite advantage by neutralizing a whole front. It also affects Austria though it's hard to tell whether the change helps or hurts. It takes away one potential enemy and protects Austria's back which is good. At the same time it takes away Austria's only potential ally that can get to Turkey in case of an R/T combination. That's bad. Also, the Venice temptation may prove Austria's undoing--going for that 'free' center too early may weaken Austria to the point where R/T can't resist the temptation of annexing Austria-Hungary!

The difference in 6 and 7 player Civ does not show such drawbacks. In fact it's hard to tell them apart. The 7 man version is more competitive, especially towards the end as more city sites are needed than are available. This is rectified by building 12 token cities but remember there are less areas per player to do this. The real struggle in the 7 player game concerns the civilization cards. Each person can hold a maximum of 11 but there are only 72 to go around. That could really hamper someone trying to get past 1000 points. I haven't played the 2,3,4 or 5 player versions but, with the possible exception of the 2 player game, they all seem to have the same playability. So Civ wins out here since you don't need a full 7 people to enjoy it. Combine that with the fact that no one gets eliminated in Civ and you have a much better ftf game than Diplomacy. In Dip you get a few people knocked out of the game and soon they're lobbying for Dip to end quick and something else to start so everyone can play. Not so in Civ. All players can actively participate to the end. And despite the fact that the rule book tells you to set aside 12 hours or more it is easier to play Civ to a conclusion than it is to end Dip. (How many Dip games, ftf or pbm, see someone get 18 centers?)

So the conclusions are simple: Diplomacy is best if you want to play by mail or lie and stab; Civilization is best for face to face play and being civilized.

(If anyone wants to use this for zine filler go right ahead.)